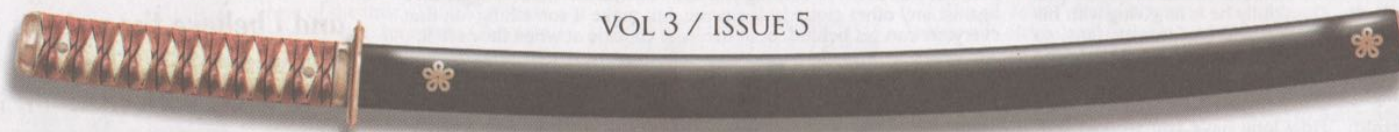


# THE IMPERIAL HERALD

VOL 3 / ISSUE 5



LEGEND OF THE FIVE RINGS INTERACTIVE STORYLINE COLLECTIBLE CARD & ROLEPLAYING GAMES

## Empire at War

To have an Empress endorsed by the Celestial Heavens is a dream made real for many within the Empire. Even more hoped that this momentous event would usher in an age of peace and learning for Rokugan, something that the Empire could have desperately used after so many wars and periods of great tension. To the detriment of all, those hopes have been dashed forever.



The Empire of Rokugan is at war, besieged by forces from beyond its borders. In August of 2010, the expansion Empire at War will bring those conflicts to the decks of those who play the game as well. In the north, the Empire's battle with the sinister Dark Oracle of Fire reaches its fever pitch, with the agents of Tamori Chosai growing ever closer to finding the Dark Covenant of Fire, the artifact that will allow him to enter the Empire once more. Should such a thing occur, Rokugan will burn.

In the south, the Crab lands have been lost, overrun with the seemingly endless ranks of the Destroyers, ironclad monstrosities in service to the dark goddess Kali-ma. The front line of the war has fallen back into the Scorpion provinces, and now the sons of Bayushi fear the loss of their lands as well. The Crane lands are flooded with refugees numbering well into the thousands, threatening famine despite the final abatement of the terrible plague that has crippled trade throughout Rokugan. And to the west, the vast Shinomen Mori, partially burned and cursed with greater traffic than at any point in its history, continues to produce enigmas and threats of an unknown nature.

Now, her divine and infernal wrath aroused by the defiance of the Great Clans and their refusal to bend to her will, Kali-ma has unleashed her greatest and most terrible weapons: the red beast. A shattered and broken





## A Closer Look At Empire At War

BY BRYAN REESE

Every set, the Player Designers and I ask one fundamental question which must be answered in order for us to continue. "Is this expansion cool?" Ultimately, if a set is not cool, then it will not be as much fun for players and will not be a success, as we measure it, for Design. So what does making a set cool ultimately mean? It means players of every clan should want to have it. There has to be great cards in the set for every clan.

In the past, themes were not focused on deck types, but rather clans as a whole. It was the goal of the designers to make sure each clan was playable. With nine clans and 150+ cards per set, that is approximately 16 cards per clan, per set. That is a lot of cards to give each clan each set! Power creep could be a massive issue, as each clan would get a brand new 40/40 deck roughly every other set. It made it very difficult to stop

the power level of deck types and clans from spiraling out of control and we would have to curb the power level of future cards very often. What this ultimately created was a situation where a significant part of a set had to be designed for things other than a competitive environment, to avoid power creep. Players reading this who have played for a while know exactly what I am talking about.

**We have created a system where we can design 16 brand new cards for each clan without having power creep issues.**

So where is this rambling going? One of our intentional goals of creating four themes per clan and focusing on them is that we get 36+ decks to design for every set. Now this might seem daunting, but it has many positives. One

of these positives is that we can design a set with our goal being 100% of the set to be both fun and competitive, in one form or another. When we do so, we get sets like The Plague War, which was received overwhelmingly well.

With Empire at War, we have done it again. We have created a system where we can design 16 brand new cards for each clan

without having power creep issues. We are making sets fun to buy, and fun to play. When players get their cards, now they are getting cards that make them excited not for just updating a deck, but for updating multiple decks

Clans and their refusal to bend to her will, Kali-ma has unleashed her greatest and most terrible weapon: the god-beast. A shattered and broken deity, the last survivor of the gods of the Ivory Kingdom other than the Destroyer herself, the god-beast is a mindless force of destruction comparable only to that of a hurricane or an earthquake. The Scorpion provinces stand no chance against the beast, and the Empire must struggle to mount a third army solely to engage the creature in a vain hope of destroying it. The destruction left in its wake is a physical thing, visible to all who look, and the Scorpion fear that its mindless rampages will soon bring it toward targets too important to lose.

As the Empire is embroiled in all-consuming war, the Mantis Clan fleet known as the Second Storm reaches the distant Ivory Kingdoms, and there soon discovers the terrible truth behind the endless legions of Kali-ma's Destroyers...

and building multiple new decks, even within just one clan.

But enough with the generalities lets talk some specifics.

Let's talk about what makes Empire at War cool for you. I can think of no better way than to talk about your cool unique cards, because quite frankly, the uniques are one of the coolest parts of a set.

Crab sees the long awaited return of Hida Benjiro, and he does not disappoint. The Rikugunsho-kan is back and ready to kick some Destroyers. As an eight force Hero, he can take provinces all by himself and he is extremely tough to stop. With a battle ability that kills, you will laugh as your

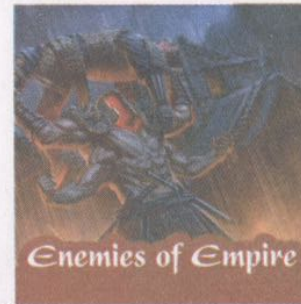
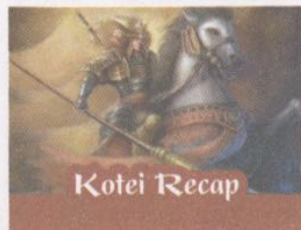
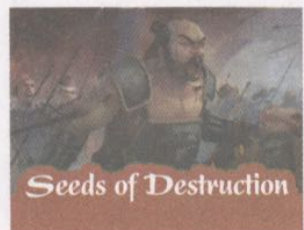
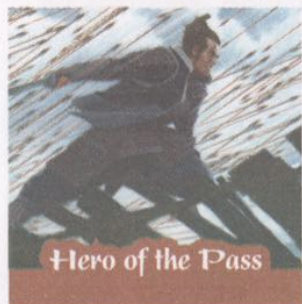
opponent tries to get in Benjiro's way.

The Crane Clan hasn't been known for the same kind of beat down that the Crab have been, but they get their own military presence in Daidoji Yaichiro Experienced. For only 8 gold he brings 5 force to the table and he comes ready to party. With some recent training he is now an Iron Crane and Scout, making him work with all the trait specific effects that entails, and he's ready to show that the Crane can fight too.



Dragon also sees an old friend return in Mirumoto Kenzo. Back to the format and ready to fight, Kenzo

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## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



# An Interview With Todd Rowland

Each month we will be bringing you an interview with an AEG staffer that has worked, or is working, on Legend of the Five Rings. And our first one is a great one:

Todd Rowland is a name familiar to most L5R players. Todd has been involved with L5R from the humble origins of a player all the way to Brand Manager of one of the oldest card games on the market today. Whether you've been playing since the beginning of the game or are a rookie this year, Todd still manages to work with L5R as much as he can, even when he's swamped with other projects. Thankfully he is as giving with his time as he has been to L5R and it's fantastic fans, so we caught up with Todd to get deeper insight into the wild ride that has been the history of Todd and Legend of the Five Rings.

**Imperial Herald:** How long have you worked specifically on L5R, and do you continue to do things with L5R now? If so, what facets of L5R do you still work with?

**Todd Rowland:** Well I started on L5R officially about five years ago. While I'm not the active manager of the game anymore, I still do work alongside the game quite a bit. I am the manager for the RPG line for Fourth Edition, and I help out a lot of with promotions and marketing of the game. We all tend to pitch in on events like the mega-game and Gen Con. L5R permeates so much at AEG that you end up working on it to some degree no matter what you're doing.

**IH:** Was your "Save the Ogres" campaign as a player inspired by any single event, or was it just a fun thing to do on a whim? There have been many community efforts over the history of L5R like this. What advice can you give to someone attempting to carve their niche in the community?

**TR:** It was actually a whim. I guess I was feeling silly that day so I put it together as a site. I had no idea so many people would sign the "petition." So from there, with the help of others, we did the Buttonmen, the big giveaway at Gen Con, etc. It was a total goofy use of time, but it was fun. If I were to give advice on how to carve a niche, I'd say first off keep it positive. Go out there to make something happen, not tear down something you don't like. Don't make it aggressive against any other group in the game, but make it something fun that everyone can get behind, or at the least chuckle at when they see it.

**IH:** There are only a handful of games that have enjoyed the longevity of L5R. What does it mean to you to have been part of the team that kept the ball rolling?

**TR:** It's very much an honor to have been a part of L5R. I think that every person who has worked on the game has brought something of themselves to it, be it an idea, their own outlook on Rokugan, or something undefinable. I hope that I was able to bring something positive during my time, and I really look forward to seeing what the future holds.

**IH:** How does the present Brand compare to the Brand of say, 10 years ago? There was a CCG explosion, and now games come and go extremely quickly. Does that bode well for the future of L5R as a whole?

**TR:** Actually I think L5R has a strong future ahead. Yes, there have been many CCGs come and go, and L5R has weathered both times of feast and famine. The game still continues to attract players, as others come and go. Even the RPG has brought in new players, as I saw a post just today by someone who picked up 4th Edition and after reading wanted to try the CCG as well. L5R will continue to grow and change, it'll adapt and alter itself with different arcs, sometimes

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**"With 4th we've tried to really break out the RPG into truly its own being again, and I believe the writers did a phenomenal job. I was honored to work with them on it."**

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slightly, sometimes greatly, but it will, in my opinion, always be a vibrant game that continues to add to its ranks of players.

**IH:** How exciting is it that we are celebrating 15 years of L5R? Did you ever think the game would be one of the longest running card games of all time? To what do you attribute the success of the game?

**TR:** I'm amazed. I was talking to Lucas Twyman last year at Gen Con and he stated that he's played L5R half his life. That made me a do a double take. If I had to attribute the success to any particular thing it would be the players. Not just because they buy it and keep it in production, but because they keep it ALIVE. The costumes and banzai still come out at big events. The arguments over minor characters still going on, the "my clan's better than your clan", etc. All of that, what the players put into it, is really what has

*(Continued on Page 7)*

## Hero of the Pass

BY SHAWN CARMAN







Iweko Setai glanced around the quartermaster's office in the portion of the Imperial Palace devoted to the elite Empress Guard. It was much better appointed than many he had seen during his years of service to the Lion Clan, but of course that was to be expected. There could be no expense too great for a unit such as the Empress Guard. But his purpose today had little to do with matters of expense; such things were better left to the Imperial Treasurer. "I see you are departing."

The ronin stopped packing his travel sack long enough to bow deeply, then resumed. "I have

been appointed to a position as an adjunct to the Shogun," he said. "I am to assume command of a contingent from the Imperial Legions and secure the passes through the Seikitsu Mountains."

"Interesting," Setai observed. "And so soon after your appointment to the Empress Guard, no less."

"I am told that many of the Guard have been dispatched by the Empress to assist her forces in the war." He paused. "It is a testament to her wisdom that she values the security of her Empire so greatly, in my estimation."

"How do you view the appointment?"

"A short time ago I was a wave man struggling to find my next meal," the ronin said. "I am grateful for my good fortune, and for the patronage of lord Taneji-sama. If my departure from the Imperial City will reduce commander Erena-sama's concerns over an unknown quantity among her guards, so much the better."

Setai was surprised. "You do not find insult?"

"I find opportunity," he answered. "This is a means to prove myself worthy of my position."

"How will you fulfill this duty?" Setai asked, changing the subject.

"I have requested a few men I know to assist in the operation," the ronin said. "There is a man named Hisao that I know from my time among the wave men. He will take command of the force securing the Iuchi Pass. I have sent a request to the City of Lies for the governor there, Bayushi Tsimaru, to renew his commission with the Legions and temporarily secure Seikitsu Pass. It is the largest, and his record is spotless."

Here Setai frowned. "Tsimaru? He is a busy man."

"A busy man with a tremendous service record," the ronin said. "If he accepts, it will greatly increase our efficiency. I will assume command of the Shamate Pass myself."

"The smallest of the three passes?"

"And the one closest to the Imperial City," the ronin replied.

"Well thought out," Setai agreed. "What is your name again, ronin?"

"Gahseng," the ronin answered. "I am Gahseng, my lord."

#### Why Empire at War Is Cool (Continued from Previous Page)

has a trait that exemplifies dragon dueling and shows why he is one of the greatest duellists in the Empire today. Having him on the table for too long will create real problems over the course of the game for your opponent.

Ikoma Hagio, the Ikoma Daimyo, shows up for the Lion Clan and he is ready to show the Empire why the Lion is one of the greatest military forces in existence. With a blanket force pump trait and a great ability, he will see play in Lion decks for a long time to come, forcing opponents to deal with your Lions over and over again.

The Mantis Clan show why they

are the greatest archers in the empire when Tsuruchi Nobumoto, a Mantis clan all-time favorite, makes a return with the largest printed ranged attack in the game and a plethora of traits to match. And yes, he will still see you back at the castle!

With Shiba Ningen unable to perform his duties as Master of the Void, Isawa Kimi has taken on the role and is here to show the Phoenix Clan what she can do. She dips into the Void in a unique way, reducing the number of actions your opponent can take in a way that makes her ability extremely rare in Celestial Edition.

For the Scorpion Clan, Bayushi Jutsushi gets experienced and continues his role as a must-play personality, both in Magistrate military and Courtier defensive dishonor. Now as the Imperial Yojimbo to Daigotsu Susumu, he has the ability to take down unique personalities that the Palace of Crimson Shadows cannot touch, with more traits than you can shake a stick at and a battle ability to boot.

The Spider Clan get to see the return of Yoritomo Hotako, though now she has fully turned to Daigotsu, taking his name. Hotako continues to impress by completely paralyzing an enemy in

fear, reducing their force to 0 and preventing them from performing actions. A very deadly combo.

And last but not least, Shinjo Dun makes a return for the Unicorn Clan. After a long absence from the CCG, Dun is ready to show you what he has learned in his time away. Cavalry, Tactician, and card draw, all in one sexy bundle.

As you'll find out as you continue to read through the Herald, Empire at War puts all the fantastic support for Kensai to great use with two strongholds that don't specifically require the Kensai trait, but work extremely well with personalities and weapons. With

all the amazing weapons and support Strategies that have been printed in The Plague War and Empire At War, Kensai go from the deck you wanted to build, to the deck you need to play against in order to be successful at your next tournament.

And this is only the beginning. Empire at War has loads of goodies for all deck types. Continuing with our aggressive goals to support 36+ themes every expansion, you will see some great tools for all of the decks of your clan.

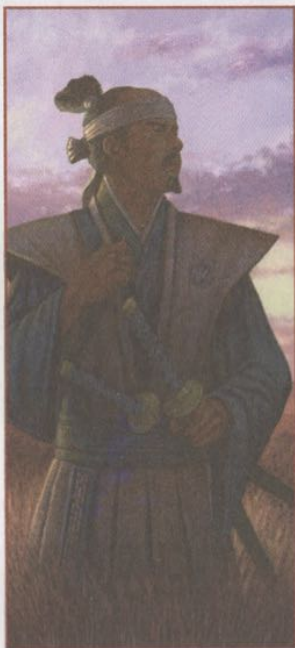
Enjoy!



# GenCon Environment

BY SCOTT HADSALL

Before he left for Gen Con, we asked our Editor, Scott Hadsall, to predict what was going to happen. We also had a little competition on our Facebook site to see if anyone could guess what the top four decks would be. How do you think you would have done? Here was Scott's prediction, and he certainly identified at least some of the decks that showed well on the final day. Though, as the eventual winner, Spider was not widely tipped by most!



It's pretty easy to decide what you're going to play at GenCon most of the time. For many members of the Imperial Assembly, you choose a clan and stick with it. That kind of loyalty is a huge reason that LSR has enjoyed such success. That success is why we're celebrating 15 years of LSR.

GenCon is so close you can smell it and while you've probably been testing your deck for weeks, I have yet to choose anything resembling my final deck. There are so many great decks I can't even narrow anything down. My testing and talking with players around the world only opens new doors to things I've previously dismissed, making the list of potential decks an almost impossible task.

If you were to name the top three or four decks for GenCon, where do you start? Mantis, with their virtually indestructible followers, Unicorn's Hero deck, Lion's speed and versatility? As the old saying goes, "the more things change, the more they stay the same." We have to start with the deck that

shaped the past five months; Last Step Castle.

While Proper Deference and Only Actions Speak are extremely large hurdles, LSC still retains the fastest honor engine in the current format. It gains Mirumoto Haru and Shadow's Talon making the dueling version of the deck much more dangerous. Even though LSC makes gains, conventional

**Predicting a winner  
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hardest things to do...**

wisdom says it will be replaced by the decks that become the new favorites in the format.

Phoenix, with the addition of such amazing unique personalities like Isawa Ochiai and Asako Bairai gain an incredible boost. Agasha Gifu and Isawa Shun also add two solid shugenja with battle actions

to the mix creating a wide variety of potential military builds out of City of Tears. Enlightenment, while not often used as a victory condition also becomes a major hurdle for other clans playing against Phoenix, as Isawa Hachiko and cards like Stare into the Void push that deck type from playable to competitive.

Mantis gains the services of a true power-unique in Tsuruchi Gidayu. Gidayu's battle action is easily one of the most impressive in all of The Plague War, but his somewhat overlooked open action to bow an attachment is probably the most utilitarian. With amazing attachments like Rising Sun Blade (which can be performed as a Naval action) the ability to bow an attachment creates the ability to play around troublesome cards. Tsuruchi Kuze, while costly at nine gold still provides a stellar stat line and a monstrous ranged six attack. The additional power of a card like Overpowering Assault creates extra use out of followers and even forces players to reconsider whether or not to in-

clude an oft overlooked personality in Yoritomo Sasake.

Unicorn is last but definitely not least. The additions of Utaku Yutpan's latest version and The Wind Never Stops provide an incredible boost to Battle Maiden decks, but pale in comparison to Blessed Herd. Unicorn has long suffered from one of the poorest gold structures in the Celestial format, and the patience they have showed during the first half of Celestial has been rewarded. Unicorn have access to fantastic unique personalities like the experienced version of Shinjo Ki-Chang, a viable switch deck type, and now a true gold structure that really affords them the fantastic military personalities that they've been given.

Predicting a winner for GenCon is always one of the hardest things to do, especially after the release of a new expansion, but it looks like these three clans have the inside track. Don't be surprised if you see me at the top tables playing something you dismissed though, it wouldn't be the first time!

## Seeds of Destruction

BY RUSTY PRISKE

Hida Tenshu looked leaner than he once had. Where once the fat on his body was minimal, it was now gone completely and the demons of hunger had started to work on his muscles. He was still strong, though, and his tetsubo had become like an extension of his arms. The rare moments when at least one of his large hands was not wrapped around it were brief, and it was always close enough that he could still act at a moment's notice.

He subsisted on whatever he could find. Sometimes he got lucky and found

the halls. They knew that if they drew too many of the scions of the dark upon



He subsisted on whatever he could find. Sometimes he got lucky and found a farmhouse that he not been destroyed and there were stores that he could take. He had learned how to stretch two days worth of food into a week when needed, and it was usually needed. Most days he would eat roots or whatever small animals he could find. That was even more difficult as even the squirrels and the rats had fled at the coming of the Destroyers.

But this was life in the Crab lands these days.

He dug into his bag with and fished out an apple. He had stumbled across a fruit tree weeks back. They were past their time and lay mostly on the ground. The lack of small animals meant they were mostly unmolested. They were dry and shriveled, but they served. He was nearly out.

He leaned back against a tree, with his feet beneath him in case he had to move quickly. He never let his mind wander so he was not caught unawares when the armored man approached.



He recognized the armor, but still remained wary, dropping the apple and swinging the tetsubo up into a ready stance.

"Tenshu-san? Is that you?" His raiment left no question that this was Hida Daizu.

Tenshu said nothing. He merely nodded.

"You have been missing for four months. There is none who held out hope that you were still alive. Thank Hida!"

A shadow fell across Tenshu's face. His voice croaked, as if out of the habit of speaking. "Four months? Is that all it has been? I had thought a lifetime."

"What happened? What have you been doing all this time?"

"We lost ground. I tried to flank and my unit ended up on the wrong side of the Destroyers."

"Your unit? Are there more of you?" Daizu's voice held hope. Tenshu's eyes did not.

"What have I been doing?" Tenshu held up his tetsubo, even with the horizon. Daizu could see the many marks upon it. It was scored and pitted along its length. "Serving the Crab."

Daizu nodded. "Then let me tell you how you can serve the Crab even more. I have a mission..."

Getting into Kyuden Hida was not difficult. No army could reach it and no small unit could take it.

When they saw it, both Crab bushi stopped and watched in silence for a moment. The fortress symbolized much. Next to the Wall itself, it epitomized the clan. It was strong – resolute. It was eternity.

It still symbolized the Crab, but in a different way.

"When Kyuden Hida was lost, many things were left behind. While none would forget items like Kettai, the Seeds of the Void were overlooked." Daizu weighed the small bag carefully in his hand.

"And these small things are what you came back for?" Tenshu's voice betrayed his doubt.

"These Seeds hold the power of the Dragon of the Void. They could be the key to defeating the Destroyers."

"If that were true, wouldn't the Kuni have taken them? Does Reiha-sama have faith in them?"

Daizu growled, "Do not worry about faith. I have enough faith for both of us. Just help me get back across the line."

The two Crab moved quickly through the corridors of their former home. They avoided rather than fought any creatures wandering

the halls. They knew that if they drew too many of the scions of the dark upon them in these confines, they would be overwhelmed. You can never fight a superior force without an escape route, unless you prefer death.

When they reached the mouth of the great fortress, where the skull of the Maw once hung, they could see that things had changed since they entered. There were goblins milling about, maybe thirty of the creatures. Unlike the random bands that could be encountered in the Shadowlands, these were armed like a fighting unit, each brandishing a long spear. They were listening to commands barked by an Ogre that had seen much battle. The scars on its body lay on him like an historical record of the path that led him to this place.

"We have no way but through them. Do you wish the goblins or their master?" Daizu whispered.

"No." Tenshu stared into Daizu's face. "Not until you

tell me why you are here. Reiha did not send you. She would never risk you on such a mission. I have never thought you to put your faith in something you did not understand instead of your arm and tetsubo. Tell me why you are here."

A shadow passed over Daizu's face but he saw that Tenshu was resolute. He would brook no equivocation. "It was my brother."

"Renga?"

"Yes. He believed in the Seeds. He thought they had a power that just had to be unlocked. The Kuni were afraid of them, he would say."

"And where is he?"

"With our father, and his father, and his father. When I found him, there was nothing that could be done. I thought nothing could pull a mountain from its roots, but I saw that I was wrong. With his last, he made me promise."

Tenshu paused then nodded. "You take the ogre." He then grasped his tetsubo in both hands and ran the last yards between the Crab and their prey. As Daizu ran behind him, Tenshu screamed "Hida!" and leapt into the mass of spears.





# MegaGame Update

BY NICOLAS BONGIU

The post-GenCon tournament season has usually been a quiet period for the L5R tournament scene apart from the traditional European Championships in the Fall and scattered events in the US and the rest of the world, but starting from 2010, it will be different.

From July, at least one major tournament will be held somewhere in the world: one of the **Jewel Championship Events**. As you know from the previous Imperial Herald, those tournaments will determine assistants to the current Jeweled Champions, or in the case of the Turquoise Championship, will determine who will serve as a patron of the arts for one year. By the time of this publication, the first Jewel Event will have taken place in Greece and Rokugan will know the name of the Amethyst Championship winner.

The second Jewel Event will take place in August, in the Philippines, and will let players elect the Turquoise Champion. Will the Crane keep their stranglehold on the fine arts or will another Clan seize the day?

September marks the return of one of Europe's most famous tournaments, in its iconic and original location. The Ruby Championship is back in Luxemburg and Tom Mulheims and crew have planned an entire weekend of festivities on the 18th and 19th. The aging Yasuki Miliko needs a valuable assistant to help her train the next generation of Emerald Magistrates. Who will be chosen?

October will see the U.S.A showcase not one, but two Jewel Tournaments. On October 2nd, join L5R Lead Designer Bryan Reese in Sacramento to help determine who will have the

ment winners during the Jewel Events, which is unfair to the last Clan.

The Dragon will get such an opportunity during **GenCon Oz**, hosted in Brisbane from September 23rd to 26th. L5R players will have the opportunity, if they win, to elect one personality from their Clan, who will come to the forefront as a hero in the battle against the Army of the Dark Fire in the northern reaches of Rokugan, earning prominence as one of the heroes of his generation for the Empire.

The top four of the tournament will receive Glory points (8/4/2/2) and, just like the Jewel Events, an Honor Event will be run during the convention, granting Honor points to the top 4 placing players (4/2/1/1). The rules of points' donation will be the same as the Jewel Events for both events held at GenCon Oz: keep for your Clan or give to the Empire, and in the case of the winner, give to a specific Clan.

South America will get the chance to run a similar tournament in September: The **South American Championship**. The MegaGame points distribution will be the same as GenCon Oz, but tournaments differ on two things: the winner can only keep for his Clan, give to the Empire or get the chance to give his points to any other of the eight Clans. You read that right: win South America Championships and any Clan – regardless of the one you're play-

an Uruwashii, a famed general sponsored by one of the Jeweled Champions whose name will be synonymous with legend in the current war.

The **level 15** series is called the Seven Sohei and lets the winner of the tournament choose three not-currently-legal personalities from his Clan. One of them will come back as a monk from one of Seven Orders within the Brotherhood.

As for the **level 20** prize, it's quite simple. Win and get a chance to design a card for the L5R CCG, with the help of the Design Team.

MegaGame implications for all these tournaments can be found on the AEG website (<http://www.l5r.com/events/stronghold-store-tournaments-megagame-implications/>)

If your local group or store isn't high enough in the Stronghold Store program to get one of the aforementioned tournaments, there is still a solution left for you: the **Winner's Choice** tournaments. Winners get to choose one trait among a list of ten (visible on <http://www.alderac.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=84567>) that a personality of his Clan will receive. These tournaments grant two Glory points to the winner (to keep or give to the Empire) and a point for the runner up (to keep only). They are the ideal launch point

- ❖ A Contest in which we ask the Clan Communities a very simple question (What would your Clan do to get rid of the Plague – or the Destroyers, for Worlds) and let one of their own submit their answer in three minutes to the assembled players. It is our hope that those submissions will be filmed and put up on the web after the event's completion. Top four Clans (judged on site) will get 8/4/2/2 points, with all four being able to donate to the Empire. Even if you cannot attend, you can definitely help craft costumes, accessories for your Clan delegate(s) so go to your Clan Forum and participate in the discussion on how you can help!

Last Imperial Herald let you in on the first two Monthly **Honor Contests** (Photo and Design a 4th Edition RPG Canon Character). Now it's time to let you in on the next two.

**September 2010** will pit players against each other during an entire month of **trivia** questions through our forums and for the first time through Facebook!

Every day on the **official forums**, questions will be asked about all aspects of 15 years of L5R (cards, rpg, art and more) and players will score points based on their correct answers.



October will see the U.S.A showcase not one, but two Jewel Tournaments. On October 2nd, join L5R Lead Designer Bryan Reese in Sacramento to help determine who will have the dubious honor of serving under fan-favorite, Shosuro Jimen, by winning the Emerald Championship. On October 16th, dark clouds will form over Massachusetts as Eric Devlin and crew organize the Obsidian Championship. Will Yoritomo Hotako be deposed, or will her iron grip close stronger around the necks of her challengers?

Santiago, Chile will host the Spider Clan's second Jewel Championship Event as Isawa Fosuta holds the Onyx Championship in November, a mockery of the Jade Championship, during which brute magical power is stronger than perfect skill.

As the end of the year draws near, Pablo Rojo will welcome you to Madrid, Spain for the Jade Championship. The relentless Kuni Daigo needs help to train Jade Legionnaires in the fight against the darkness.

This series of tournaments will end with the annual Topaz Championship. Spend 2011 New Year's weekend in Chicago and choose which young samurai of the Empire will pass his gempukku with flying colors.

All these tournaments will have MegaGame implications: the top 8 of the tournament will gain Glory points (8/4/2/2/1/1/1/1), which can be kept for their Clan or given to the Empire\* (yes, all 8 can donate!). The winner gets an additional choice however: he can give his points to the Clan that currently holds the Jewel position (Mantis for Amethyst, Crab for Ruby, Scorpion for Emerald, Spider for Obsidian, Unicorn for Topaz) or the Clan that currently has an affinity with the position (Crane for Turquoise, Lion for Jade, Phoenix for Onyx). They will also host an Honor Event, in the same vein as the Kotei tournaments (Charity Drive, Theme Deck or Costume Contest) with an increased points distribution (8/4/2/2) suitable to the status of those tournaments within the Empire.

That makes eight of the nine Clans that will get the chance to receive points from tourna-

the winner can only keep for his Clan, give to the Empire or get the chance to give his points to any other of the eight Clans. You read that right: win South America Championships and any Clan – regardless of the one you're playing, can gain eight Glory or four Honor! The rest of the top four in both competitions will only be able to keep points for the Clan they played.

In the same fashion as GenCon Oz, the winner will choose one personality from their Clan to come under the spotlight during the battle against the Destroyers in the south. He will become one of the acclaimed heroes of his generation for Rokugan.

An active L5R tournament scene would be nothing without the participation of the **Stronghold Stores**, retailers that promote the game throughout the world and to which you give your support when you become an Assembly member. AEG has decided to allow those stores to run tournaments that will have a MegaGame impact until the end of the year, under certain conditions.

First, the store has to be of a minimum level in the Stronghold Store program, so if you want your local store to get a chance to host one of those events, spread the word and make sure every player that plays there is registered to the Imperial Assembly.

Only stores of level 10+, 15+ and 20+ will get to run such events with MegaGame implications scaling as the store grows. Check out the Stronghold Store update to find out which stores have currently achieved those milestones and will host one of those tournaments. Storyline Kits have already started shipping to the listed stores and as the year progresses and more stores reach one of those three milestones, new kits will be sent their way. Kits are based upon level, and are **cumulative**, so a level 16 store will get a chance to host a level 10 and a level 15 tournament!

You already know of the current **level 10** series, which lets the winner nominate one personality from his Clan to become one of the Sanctified Ones. When that series comes to an end, Level 10 tournament winners will be able to choose one of their Clan to become

the winner of a personality of his Clan will receive. These tournaments grant two Glory points to the winner (to keep or give to the Empire) and a point for the runner up (to keep only). They are the ideal launch point for a Tournament Organization experience, so do not hesitate to submit an application.

**GenCon Indy** (Aug 5-8) and the **World Championships in Lyon** (Nov 5-7), being the largest tournaments in the world, will, logically, get the largest MegaGame implications.

The Main Tournaments at both will let all top 16 players score Glory points (16 for the winner, 8 for the runner up, 4 for both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2 for places 5 to 8 and 1 for places 9 to 16), with the top four to give to the Empire as well as their Clan.

The Second Chance Tournament will allow the top four to gain Glory points (8/4/2/2) with the first two being able to give their points to the Empire.

The Winner's Choice Tournament will allow the top four to gain Glory points for their Clan only, but as they get the same amount of points (2) they also get to pick one Trait from the Winner's Choice list, making them all a winner!

If you don't play the CCG, there is still ways to help your Clan at those two huge L5R events, as well as during the six months left in the MegaGame season.

Both events will host four different Honor competitions. By the time you receive this magazine, GenCon will be underway or already over, and word will have filtered on those, but here they are again summarized for you:

- ❖ A Costume Contest worth 8/4/2/2 Honor points for the top four players, with the top two able to donate to the Empire.
- ❖ A Theme Deck Contest worth 8/4/2/2 Honor points for the top four players, with the top two able to donate to the Empire.
- ❖ A T-shirt Contest (most by Clans at the time of the counting) worth 4/2/1/1 with the winning Clan, at the Event, being able to donate to the Empire.

Every day on the **official forums**, questions will be asked about all aspects of 15 years of L5R (cards, rpg, art and more) and players will score points based on their correct answers. However, only the first two correct answers will get points! At the end of the month, tallies per forum handle will be made and the top four players will receive Honor points (4/2/1/1) with the winner being able to give his points to the Empire.

The trivia contest on **Facebook** will be run as a true competition. One question will be asked every day, qualifying the first two non-qualified Facebook accounts. When we have a field of 32, every day will qualify half the field (giving us a field of 16, then 8, and so on). The last two days of the month, the best two players will face off on a best of seven question series. Top four players will receive Honor points (4/2/1/1) with the winner being able to give his points to the Empire as part of his victory.

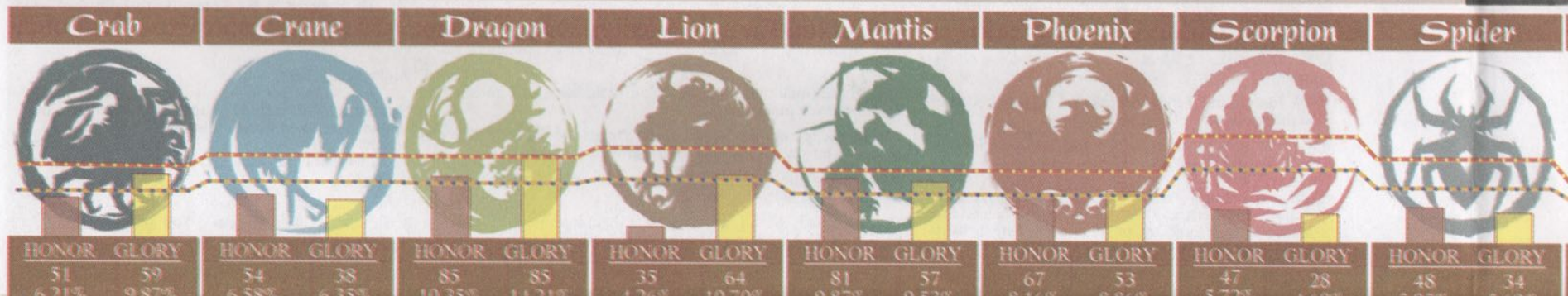
**October 2010** will allow you to let your imagination go wild as you will be able to submit Inspirational Posters for the troops of Rokugan. The Empire is in danger and the samurai are weary so cheer them up with your wit and a fitting image! Once again, Top four players will receive Honor points (4/2/1/1) with the winner being able to give his points to the Empire as part of his victory.

The MegaGame will also partner with **Solving the Riddle**, a series of charity tournaments. As the magazine goes into printing, no definitive decisions have been made so keep an eye on the official website for announcements regarding that great endeavor.

The 2010 MegaGame has contests that each and every one of you can take part in so don't shy away from bringing Honor or Glory (depending on your affinities) to your Clan and/or the Empire. The future of Rokugan is in your hands!

All this information can also be found on [www.l5r.com](http://www.l5r.com)

*\*every time a player is in a position to give their points to the Empire, Spider Players can choose to donate to Jigoku instead.*





# Kotei Recap

The Empire's Glory began this year with the Kotei season creating an entirely new level of strategy for each of the Clans in the Emerald Empire. With threats appearing on the map each week to be resolved, the clans had to work together and make choices that you as Imperial Assembly members decided upon. The resolution to the Kotei season may have ended many threats to Rokugan, but many more may yet appear. The second half of the Mega Game has just begun, require the full attention of not just the players but also the armies of the Clans.

During the Kotei season the decision of Spider players regarding Daigotsu Chaozhu was one that you know has been resolved, with Chaozhu being released to Spider players with an active Assembly membership as of June 30, 2010. Spider players overwhelmingly donated more points to the Empire than Jigoku, so Chaozhu will be mailed, and become legal with Empire At War.

The Ronin saga of Karatsu the Tyrant, Kironada and the Siege of the Palace of the Breaking Dawn took place during turns five and nine. This first part of this challenge was met by armies of the Empire, saving the members of the Legion of 2000 from ambush by Karatsu himself. The Crab, Dragon and Lion will see former members of their clan become ronin and join the Legion of 2000, as reward for the aid given to the Legionnaires.

The Palace of the Breaking Dawn then came under siege by Karatsu during turn nine, with Karatsu threatening to burn the palace to the ground, causing the stronghold to no longer be legal. Karatsu's pact with the Dark Oracle of Fire, Tamori Chosai, could have potentially caused great damage to the Empire while many of the armies of the Clans are battling the Destroyers. The membership of the Assembly vanquished this threat as well, and the Palace was saved. Karatsu was killed in the siege and the Palace of the Breaking Dawn will remain legal throughout the remainder of the Celestial story arc.

With the final Kotei ending the weekend of June 26th, the race for Honor and Glory has reached the mid-point. Honor and Glory will continue to be garnered by the Clans for the rest of the year, so even if your clan is behind, the opportunities for large point swings in either category are still available through both our community events and further tournaments.

The Glory of the Empire is a hotly contested race, with (at the time of printing) the Lion holding a narrow lead over the Dragon. A mere four points separate the two, with the Crab only four points behind the Dragon. In the last Imperial Herald we told you that the Spider were the current leaders in the Honor of the Empire, however they have been overtaken by the Crane clan who now sit in first place, while the Crab come in third. If the Mega Game were to finish at the end of June, the Lion, who were in first place at the time of printing of the last Herald, would still see a Seppun Elite Unit join the ranks of their armies in a narrow victory. The Crane would now foster the Imperial Heir instead of the Spider, gaining valuable political capital. The Crab however would come in third place in Glory AND Honor!

For the rest of the year, the Mega Game will continue and the opportunities for you to influence the outcome of the game will increase. Pay close attention to [www.LSR.com](http://www.LSR.com) for more information regarding monthly honor contests and tournament announcements. United, the Empire will prevail. Divided, it will crumble.

Turn 9  
Week 2







the empire will prevail. Divided, it will crumble.



## Stronghold Stores

### LEVEL 8 STORES\*

ALIANZA	Santiago (CH)
LEGENDES D'AUTRE MONDES	Bourgoin-Jallieu (FR)
ROLE GAMES	Marseille (FR)

### LEVEL 9 STORES\*

THE GAME CASTLE	Londonderry, NH
UNIVERS PARALLELE	Toulouse (FR)
VISION CARDS & GAMES	Montgomery, AL

### LEVEL 10+ STORES\*

ALTERNATE REALITIES (lvl 11)	Stillwater, OK
GUARDIAN GAMES	Portland, OR
KAISSA MONOKEROS (lvl 11)	Athens (GR)
PATRIOT GAMES (lvl 11)	Sheffield (UK)
PLAN B (lvl 11)	Barcelona (SP)
WHO'S ON 1ST GAMES & COLLECTIBLES (lvl 11)	Dublin, CA

### LEVEL 15+ STORES\*

GNOME GAMES TOURNAMENT CENTER (lvl 14)	Green Bay, WI
PADIS (lvl 15)	Madrid (SP)
ULTRA COMIX (lvl 15)	Nuernberg (DE)
WAR DOGS GAME CENTER (lvl 15)	Jacksonville, FL
TROLL2JEUX (lvl 17)	Paris (FR)

\* as of press time

Stores listed as lvl+ and lvl+ have already been sent Stronghold: Korea.



# The Utility of Duality

BY NICK JONES

Constructing an efficient deck capable of advancing your own victory condition and simultaneously supporting the flexibility of a meta package or disruption of your opponent's victory condition is amongst the most complicated endeavors in LSR.

Early in the history of the game meta was relegated mainly to dedicated slots during Holding or Strategy selection, each of which was highly matchup or game-circumstance specific (e.g., Lies, Lies, Lies...). Later Strategies combined analogous meta reducing the number of dedicated slots a Fate deck would need to use during common game situations (e.g., Outer Walls).

Current Strategy design continues this evolution by combining reactive meta with proactive actions. This combination generates tremendous efficiency during deck construction while encouraging interactive play and promoting pitched battles. Current dual-action Strategies meeting these criteria include The Height of Courage, Only Actions Speak, The Cost of Pride, etc.

This new type of Strategy generates efficiency by physically reducing the number of cards required to generate the same amount of effects during deck construction. The Cost of Pride, for example, effectively creates one to three physical card slots compared to previous iterations of decks in Celestial Edition. Early in the arc, Outer Walls was a staple of military builds with the prevalence of Ranged Attacks in the environment. By The Harbinger, Outer Walls had fallen out of builds due to an expanded card pool and Arrows Do Not Falter. With the Cost of Pride, military builds can achieve early arc protection while maintaining a proactive, versatile Battle action all in the same slot.

Utility Holdings require reconsideration given the number of effective dual-action Strategies available. Replace Akodo's Grave with Inexorable Defeat or The Thriving Light for the same effect. Military

Generating free Fate slots or transitioning Dynasty meta to the Fate allows new freedoms during deck construction to bolster your own victory condition or to be free to consider complementary meta packages. For example, removing Akodo's Grave, for fate side dual-action Strategies may provide space for a second Travelling Peddler or a pair of Oyo Seido to strengthen a match against dishonor. Honor players can now consider a card like Only Actions Speak as mirror meta, while still maintaining a robust battle action in that slot for military games.

Empire at War further promotes dual-action Strategies with the inclusion of Battle Fatigue, Distractions in Court, Immovable Object, Superior Mobility, Travel Light, and Unstoppable Cut.

Travel Light is the first Fate meta available to combat the Celestial card type. The Battle action is highly playable considering the plethora of both effects and costs that cause personalities to bow during battle. The card draw triggers from widely played personalities like Matsu Kasei, Tsuruchi Saya, and Hida Hebi.

Superior Mobility is a key Empire At War Strategy combining unit straighten and a sneaky unit send home that bypasses commonly played meta like Chagatai's Armor and Height of Courage. Attachment decks will find good mileage from both actions.

Distractions in Court provides honor, dishonor, and switch decks a complement to their dishonor meta package and the Open

action enables low cost disablement of your opponent's strongest unit. Between The Thriving Light, Proper Deference and Distractions in Court, honor players could consider the removal of Deeds and Words from their Dynasty decks. Three additional Dynasty slots dedicated to a smoother gold curve or additional honor gaining holdings will provide extra burst in the midgame, or may overwhelm dishonor decks with permanent reusable honor gaining effects.

Unstoppable Cut and Immovable Object allow for enhanced utility for Kensai and Berserker, respectively. Unstoppable Cut prevents send home effects and thematically allows for multiple bow effects from a single action. Immovable Object allows Crab players to straighten numerous personalities during the open phase with Shattered Peak Castle or replicate similar effects for the Fortress of the Forgotten. Proactively, the action can be used to bow a Personality or Follower with lower force.

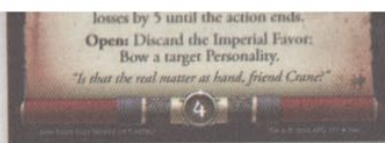
Battle Fatigue, in combination with Inexorable Defeat, provides players numerous Region destruction options during deck construction. This allows players using Front Line Camp to replace that Holding with something more productive. The bow Battle action is easily played considering the number of power personalities currently employed in the environment.

Consider the utility of each dual-action Strategy introduced with the potential it has to consolidate physical slots within your build or introduce complementary meta packages. Efficiency is the key to victory. See you in the top 16





five dual-action strategies available. Replace Akodo's Grave with Inexorable Defeat or The Thriving Light for the same effect. Military and dishonor builds may replace Deeds and Words with Only Actions Speak.



# Not Competitive? Think Again!

BY CHRIS FUCHS

## Empire at War provides some powerful support for deck types previously thought of as 'fun, but not competitive'.

The Scorpion and Dragon strongholds are valid choices for any military deck you'd consider building, but Kensai are the logical best choice for both due to the potential use of weapons for their battle actions. Scorpion no longer need to rely on pure luck to use their focus value-based actions and Commander decks receive two must-play strategy fate cards with multiple personalities that deserve consideration. Ninja gain some much needed survivability, Deathseekers pick up more switch capability, and Mantis Thunder shugenja get some great actions that can be used with the Naval trait.

The Scorpion stronghold, Fortress of Blackened Sight, allows you to manipulate the top two cards of your fate deck as a Limited action. Several of the Scorpion Kensai personalities are reliant upon the focus value of your top fate card, so you no longer have to guess at the chance that these personalities are able to use their actions with successful results. In addition, new Kensai Bayushi Shigehiro has greater effectiveness based on focus value with a bonus effect if the shown card is a weapon, instead of potentially generating no effect.

The Dragon stronghold, Farthest Fortress, allows you to keep a weapon in your hand until you need it during battle, where you'll also have the opportunity to replace it with a newly drawn fate card. Even if you have no weapons in hand, you can still bow an enemy Personality with lower Force than your performing Personality. Neither stronghold requires a Kensai performer, but a Kensai is more likely to have a weapon available and generally makes better use of

the weapons you give them. Dragon Clan Earth shugenja Tamori Kuroko brings reliable weapon coverage to any deck that needs them as long as you can meet her four Honor Requirement, and if you like combos, Isawa Emori's trait allows her to give out Weapons without bowing!

Kensai will find many reasons to love the Blade of Perfection. This weapon straightens after it bows so it can be used for as many costs that require bowing a weapon as you need. It can also be brought back into play if it or its Personality is destroyed by another player's action. Stay Put takes some inspiration from the Dragon and Scorpion strongholds, allowing your Kensai to attach a Weapon and bow an enemy card without Weapons or Armor.

Attachment decks of all types will find use in Wooden Barricade, a two cost utility holding that allows you to transfer and straighten an attachment from one of your personalities to another as an Open action. The action can be taken even if bowed so you can get double duty out of weapons and followers by using them to take provinces, then transfer them to your newly-purchased personalities to help defend against your opponent's next attack.

Conscript Troops is a free Open action that allows you to look at the top five cards of your Fate deck and attach a Follower to your performing Commander for four less Gold and shouldn't have to compete for a slot in any Commander deck. Fire on My Command gives your Commanders with Followers another Force-based Ranged Attack with no cost, unlike personalities like Yoritomo Sunagawa who require you to bow a Follower to produce a Ranged Attack. Ninja can use the Night Watchers Follower and Smoke Cover Strategy to ignore or delay Battle actions from their opponent. Between Matsu Otsuko and Honorable Death, Deathseeker decks find it easier than ever to gain Honor while providing a credible military threat to their opponent's provinces. Defending against Thunder Dragon Bay shugenja will become even more challenging, as Naval Thunder Shugenja can perform Fury of Suitengu which allows each player to target and bow up to two non-Naval Personalities at the current battlefield.

Next time you're deciding what deck to build, take another look at a deck type you have previously ignored and see what new options it has. Dragon and Scorpion Kensai get big boosts thanks to their strongholds and other Kensai support. Ninja will be harder to take down with a single action. Deathseekers can easily focus on Military or Honor, switching between the two with little difficulty, and Commander decks of all clans get tools for reliability and consistency. This diversity gives you countless avenues to explore in deck construction, so don't be afraid to revisit those old 'fun' decks from time to time!





# Enemies of the Empire

Releasing in August is the first sourcebook for our new edition of the Legend of the Five Rings Role-playing Game, **Enemies of the Empire**! As you might gather from the title, the book is all about potential enemies you can use in your campaigns if you are a GM, but there's so much in there for players that simply calling it a 'monster manual' type book would be a great disservice. There are lots of things to use in your game, yes, but there are just as many new mechanics for characters to use. Want to play a Naga, a Nezumi, a Spirit, or even a Ronin? This book is a must have for you, then.

There's been a lot of speculation on the forums as to what this book will cover. Who better to get a first look than our loyal Imperial Assembly members? **Enemies of the Empire** will include chapters on the following groups: Ancient Races (including the Kenku, Kitsu/Tsuno, Ningyo, Trolls, and the Zokujin), a Bestiary, the Bloodspeakers, the Kolat, the Lost, Naga, Nezumi, the Nothing, Oni, Ronin, Shadowlands Beasts, Spirits, and the Undead.

That's a lot to pack into one book! I'm sure there must be some campaigns out there that won't use at least one or two things from **Enemies of the Empire**, but I can't imagine what those campaigns must be about. For most folks, however, there are enough things in here to spark the imagination and utterly transform character concepts. Here's a first look at the sort of enemy write-ups you can expect to see a lot of:

## AVERAGE NAGA SCOUT (RANK 3)

Air: 3 Earth: 3 Fire: 4 Water: 2 Akasha: 3

**Reflexes:** 4 **Perception:** 4 **Caste:** 3 **Glory:** 0.5  
**Initiative:** 7k4 (+4 each Reactions Stage of combat while not acting first)  
**Attack:** Yumi 10k4 (Complex) **Damage:** Yumi 5k2  
**Armor TN:** 30 (Light Armor) **Reduction:** 3 (Light Armor)  
**Wounds:** Human-type Wound Ranks **School/Rank:** Greensnake Scout 3  
**Skills:** Athletics (Climbing) 3, Defense 2, Hunting (Survival, Tracking) 5, Investigation (Notice) 3, Kenjutsu 1, Kyujutsu (Yumi) 6, Lore: Shadowlands 3, Stealth 2  
**Advantages:** Higher Purpose (Defeat the Foul), Quick, Way of the Land (Shinomen)  
**Disadvantages:** Antisocial 2 (with non-Naga), Can't Lie, Idealistic



And here are some new mechanics:

### MOONLESS RIDERS


The Moonless Riders are an extremely small and specialized group of ronin who have carefully cultivated skills that allow them to not only survive, but seek regular employment from the armies of the Great Clans. The Riders, who are comprised primarily of former Unicorn, Lion, and Dragon samurai, specialize in cavalry tactics – but unlike most samurai, they train at night. As a result, they are among the pre-eminent nocturnal scouts and couriers in the Empire. The Unicorn find their practices distasteful due to the risk posed to horses in night operations, but the Moonless Riders consider this a necessity in order to maintain their livelihood. Although they wander freely across the Empire, the Moonless Riders do tend to linger in areas where clans share borders, and often find employment by the Lion along the Unicorn border and, less frequently, the Crane border as well. Minor Clans also employ them when possible to protect themselves against hostile neighboring Great Clans.

**TECHNIQUE RANK:** 2

**REQUIREMENTS:** Horsemanship 3+, Way of the Land







Want to play a Naga,  
a Nezumi, a Spirit,  
or even a Ronin?

#### TECHNIQUE RANK: 2

**REQUIREMENTS:** Horsemanship 3+, Way of the Land

**TECHNIQUE:** Moving the Shadow – Moonless Riders are experts at all things nocturnal. You do not suffer any penalties that might be incurred due to natural darkness. When active at night or in other forms of darkness (such as a basement or cave), you gain a bo-nus of +2k1 instead of +1k1 when you spend a Void Point to enhance any non-Weapon Bugei Skill.

**NEW RONIN BASIC SCHOOL:** Self-Taught Shugenja

**BENEFIT:** +1 Willpower

**SKILLS:** Athletics, Hunting, Meditation, Spellcraft, any three non-High Skills

**HONOR:** 4.0

**OUTFIT:** Sturdy Robes, Wakizashi, any 1 weapon, Traveling Pack, Scroll Satchel, 5 bu

**AFFINITY/DEFICIENCY:** Self-taught shugenja typically have great holes in their training as a result of the trial and error method by which they learn the ways of the kami. You may choose any one non-Void Element in which to have an Affinity. You automatically gain a Deficiency in the opposing Element and in any one other Element of your choice.

**TECHNIQUE:** The Kami's Gift – Those who are self-taught possess an affinity for the kami that many among the clans would envy. When you spend a Void Point on a Spellcasting Roll, you add +2k2 instead of +1k1. Unfortunately, you do not automatically gain additional spells when you advance in Rank; you must seek them out on your own.

**SPELLS:** Sense, Commune, Summon, and any five spells you can cast (no spells may be in Elements for which you have a Deficiency).

#### Interview With Todd Rowland (Continued from Page 2)

made L5R the long running success it has been.

**IH:** Are there any similarities between working on the CCG and the RPG? Do you see or feel the same kind of longevity in the RPG that the CCG has enjoyed?

**TR:** I do feel the longevity in the RPG. The RPG is definitely a different beast however. As you know in the CCG you can play Open formats, and we do try to encourage it as much as we can, but a reality is that the vast majority of players will play the current arc. Not so with RPGs. There are people who are first edition purists, others who like third, etc. With managing the RPG you have to accept that some fans simply aren't going to come along for the ride. So with 4th Edition we set out specifically to target those who are not as engaged with the game at the moment. Though the

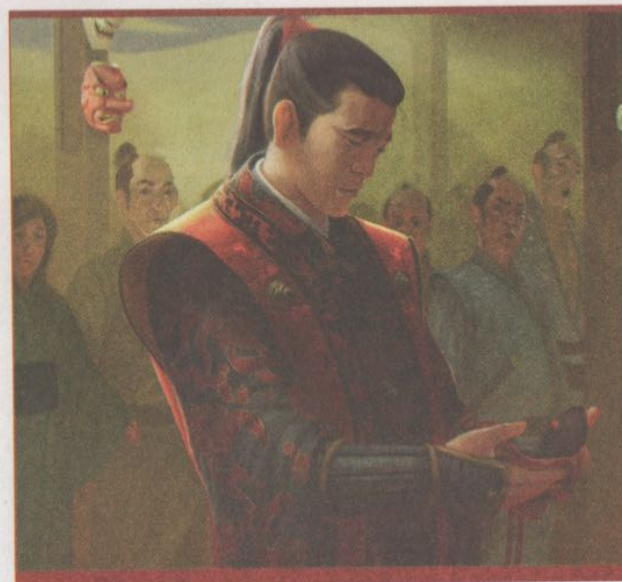
full extent has yet to be seen, from the posts and reviews we've seen on RPG sites so far, we seem to have had a success. The RPG has always sort of been an addition to the CCG, a place where players could get more info on monsters, locations, the Clans, etc. With 4th we've tried to really break out the RPG into truly its own being again, and I believe the writers did a phenomenal job. I was honored to work with them on it.

The management of it is definitely different. With the CCG there are lots of events, constant new art needs, coordination of print jobs, promotions, etc. With the RPG there are similar things, such as the designer diaries promotions, but they tend to take place over longer periods of time. A frantic rush to determine the proper fonts, layout look, cover, then... months... while the book is written. A frantic rush to choose the right art... then weeks while the

text is edited. So it allows a lot of time for me to focus on other AEG projects, such as promoting Thunderstone and our other lines.

**IH:** We have heard that there are plans for an L5R seminar on Saturday night at GenCon this year regarding the 15-year celebration of L5R. Can you elaborate as to what exactly we can expect from that seminar?

**TR:** Well, I can tell you this, it isn't a seminar. It's a party! 15 years worth of celebration, we thought that deserved a good party. For the last two seminars you had to listen to my boring self up there blabbing about things, now you can come in, have a drink, hang out with us, and watch a few of the Mega-Game contests we have lined up for this year. There may even be a new goodie just for those who attend the party! Watch L5R.com for more info on the location and time.





# EMPIRE AT WAR

A woman with dark, flowing hair and a small red and gold crown is depicted floating in a pond. She wears a green robe with red lining and a red sash. Her hair and the robe's edges are blowing in the wind. The pond is filled with large, dark green lily pads. The background is a misty, greyish-green sky.

"Are these the final  
days of the Emerald  
Empire?"





“Honor. Blood. Steel. L5R Your Way.”

# L5R 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

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